



**DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES**

**One Center Plaza  
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*"Together...ReShaping Young Lives"*

*Martin J. O'Malley.  
Governor*

*Anthony G. Brown  
Lt. Governor*

*Donald W. DeVore  
Secretary*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
*News Release*

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**BALTIMORE, March 5, 2007** – Secretary Don DeVore of the Maryland Department of Juvenile Justice, released the following statement today in reaction to the State Medical Examiner's ruling in the death of Isaiah Simmons at Bowling Brook Preparatory Academy last month. The Examiner ruled that the death was a homicide.

*"Today's ruling by the State Medical Examiner highlights the critical need to reform our Department of Juvenile Services so that all children in state custody are safe. That is our mission and failure is not an option. Last week, we announced a 7-point plan for increased oversight at and staff training at Maryland's State Licensed and State Operated juvenile facilities, and I look forward to continuing work to reform DJS."*

Secretary DeVore's 7-point action plan includes:

- Immediately removed the remaining youth in State custody from the school.
- Notified Pennsylvania authorities of Bowling Brook's closure.
- Complete an inspection sweep of all private juvenile facilities within 90 days – to ensure compliance with all safety requirements.
- Issue new restraint guidelines for all State operated and State licensed juvenile facilities within 30 days.
- Develop new crisis intervention training standards for State-operated and State-licensed facilities within 120 days, working with the other relevant State agencies – the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Maryland State Department of Education.
- Begin to conduct exit interviews with youth after they leave State-operated and State-licensed facilities – to ensure that they feel able speak freely about problems and concerns.
- Create a quality assurance capacity within DJS – to proactively ensure that high standards are being met.

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